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THE FIRST SITTING
OF THE
Committee
ON THE
PROPOSED MONUMENT
TO
Shakspeare.

Bennett, Printer
Tewkesbury.

THE
FIRST SITTING
OF THE
COMMITTEE
ON THE
PROPOSED MONUMENT
TO
Shakspeare.

Carefully taken in Short-Hand
BY ZACHARY CRAFT,
Amanuensis to the Chairman.

“Come like Shadows—so depart.”

MACBETH.

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1823.

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA BARBARA

SCENE—The Green-Room.

TIME—Midnight.

The Committee take their seats at a long table, in the centre of which is placed a bust of Shakspeare: near it stands an antique lamp.

THE FIRST SITTING
OF THE
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PROPOSED MONUMENT
TO
Shakspeare.

THE CHAIRMAN.

THE business of this evening, Gentlemen, is of no common interest. We are here assembled to take into consideration such plans, as men of science or taste may propose, for the monument of our SHAKSPEARE, the main bulwark of the British stage, the touchstone of the talents of our actors, the pride of our isles. Without presuming to launch into panegyrics on that poet, whose philosophy is in

every Briton's heart, and whose lines are on every tongue, I propose, without further prologue, that we proceed to the dispatch of the object of our meeting here.

A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. Chairman! Before we enter upon any discussions, I beg that some means may be taken to ventilate this crowded room; for I never before experienced such an oppressive heat, and difficulty of respiration. There's thunder, I'm sure, in the air.

[The thunder rolls in loud peals, and a ball of fire strikes and rends one of the sides of the green-room;—through the fissure]

THE SHADE OF ARISTOTLE *glides and appears.*

In my saunterings through the asphodel groves, (you may well stare at my appearance

among you,) I have paid considerable attention to your great dramatic poet, O *Brettanians!* and great he unquestionably is, in spite of the ill-digested stuff which he often forces us to swallow. Notwithstanding the decided inferiority of your dialect to our's, *Na Dia!* I have found numerous passages, aye, whole scenes in his dramas, worthy of the gold casket which my restive pupil consecrated to his Homer. But I can hardly forgive your poet, O *Brettanians!* for having transgressed my rules. What a pity it is that, during his retreat, he did not meliorate the arrangement of his productions, and exclude from them trash which *must* always tend to diminish his glory out of the island which gave him birth! But, (*smiling satirically, and stuttering in a shrill tone, as he was wont,*) I am aware that you *Brettanians*, have stronger digestive organs than us Athenians. You can stomach food, (*hose epos eipein*) which would give the Penteleus goat-herds a vomit. Let your poet, nevertheless, have a handsome monument.

(*Vanishes.*)

THE CHAIRMAN,

Somewhat agitated at the unexpected apparition.

I beg the Committee to understand, that the gentleman who has just delivered his opinion, has given it unmasked. As it appears he comes from the shades below, we may presume that he is a member of the *sub-committee*. But as his name stands high, we are bound to treat him with respect, as well as any strangers belonging to his suite, who may choose to address the Committee on this interesting occasion.

SHADE OF LONGINUS *appears.*

Had your illustrious poet, O *Brettanians!* whose works I have lately scanned in the Elysian shades with the Stagirite, and Quintilian the Iberian, preceded me upon earth, I could better have illustrated my theories, by citing numerous passages of his *Macbeth* and *Othello* especially, as noble specimens of the essence

of the sublime. You have my vote for a splendid monument. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF ÆSCHYLUS *appears.*

When the tortoise fell on my pate in Sicily, (you will not on this occasion, I trust, consider my appearance obtrusive) my countrymen, O *Brettanians!* never subscribed for a monument worthy of my memory, notwithstanding that I was the first to give the drama form and consistency; notwithstanding too that I fought honourably for my country at Salamis and Plateæ, and flattered the institutions of Athens in my *Persæ*. But you, *Brettanians*, prove yourselves more grateful to a poet who rivals me in sublimity. In my rambles through the Elysian fields, (and Hermes hath removed all film from my eyes,) I have lately compared several of his tragedies with mine, and am of opinion, that, could the Athenian ladies have witnessed some of his scenes, they would have been seized by as

violent hysterics as at my *Eumenides*. I would have you nevertheless understand, that I would not exchange the second act of my *Cœphoræ* for any two acts that the *Brettanian* can shew. Entertaining, nevertheless, a very high idea of his powers, I give you my hearty vote for a monument to his honour; and I scarcely flatter you by saying, that before your poet's birth, Prometheus was chained; but when Shakspeare appeared—he was delivered. I could add much more on the merits and demerits of your poet; but what I have said must suffice; for my attention is wholly engrossed by a loud hubbub near the ivory portals, concerning the delivery of my country from the yoke of barbarians. The iron decrees of Clotho, Atropos, and Lachesis prohibit, alas! my re-appearance on earth in material form, and the re-assumption of my Salaminian sword on the glorious occasion; but I must speed forthwith to the adamantine gates, and try what my presence can effect there.

Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF EURIPIDES *appears.*

Sophocles and myself, O *Brettanians!* (my intrusion here, I perceive, startles you,) stretched at length, as we often are, in the asphodel meadows, have diligently compared the dramatic works of your Shakspeare with our own. Much we have found to applaud, and much to reprehend. His various delineation of character we have found to be admirable; and he has sometimes reaches of thought, which perhaps surpass our highest. But I would not give my *Medea* for his *Despoina Macbeth*; neither would Sophocles exchange his *Antigone* for the *Cordelia* of the *Brettanian*. My Colonean friend said to me lately, with his usual candour, as we were seated by the crystalline lakes:—"I probably shall be found to be his inferior in the natural and happy developement of the affections of the soul; and his *Lear* is as tragically wrought as my *Ædipus*, or *Ajax raving*. The sentiments of his dramatic personages too, generally speaking, bear less the mark

“ of the laborious author than mine ; but he
 “ does not walk in the *colthurnus*, with such
 “ uniform dignity as I ; neither has he any
 “ character that expresses physical dolour,
 “ equal to my *Philoctetes*.”

I observe that, in one of his pieces, your poet prates incoherently of *Hecuba*. What can be his *Hecuba* to mine ? Did he, in the name of the *Dioscuri* ! ever express maternal anguish like my *Hecuba* ? I find indeed one *Constance*, a *Celt*, who faintly resembles her ; but she is only sketched imperfectly. There is also one *Bolomunia* a *Romæan* ; but he has stolen nearly all her sentiments from our Plutarch of Chaeronea. My *Hecuba* is fully developed, and leaves, as my dæmon whispers, nothing to be desired. I am not clear that, for general grandeur of effect, he can shew any tragedy equal to my *Troades* ; neither can I discover that he has placed virginal innocence in so trying and affecting a dilemma, as I have, in my *Iphigenia in Aulis*. On the other hand, his *Romeo and Juliet* expresses more truly and delicately disappointed love than any one

of my tragedies. His *Timon* we have found to be a grand effort of genius; though I cannot say much for his conception of our versatile *Alcibiades*. The conduct of our dramas, I can assert without arrogance, is better than his; for your Shakspeare too frequently indulges in subordinate plots, which must necessarily harass the minds of the spectators, and divert them from the principal action. One piece however, called *Othello*, wherein he is more regular than usual, would rouse the jealousy of Sophocles and myself, were we not now, Jove be thanked! out of the influence of the malignant passions.

We laughed heartily at one of his compositions, the scene of which lies at our Athens, exhibiting nevertheless several passages in which a superior genius is manifest. One of the characters, I remember, he gives us with an *Ass's Head*; another he styles *Arachne's Web*; another, *Blóssom of the Pea*; another, *Ray of the Moon*; and another, *Seed of Sinapi*; with other preposterous conceits, which he associates with our *Theseus* and a

Queen of the Amazons. Na Dia! a fresh crew of monsters for our hero to combat, rather than be classed with! I say nothing of his absurd anachronisms, of his dramas being surcharged with characters, nor of his neglect of the unities, for which we *poor Greeks* (*bowing ironically*) always entertained, it seems, a too *scrupulous* reverence.

But one of the grossest, and least excusable faults, which we have found, in examining the productions of your Shakspeare, *O Britanians!* is his childish play upon words, often indulged too in the most tragical crises. By the *Charites!* had Sophocles and myself treated an Athenian audience with such infantine vagaries, we should have been pelted with rotten figs and olives in the theatre of Bacchus. As for his chorusses—*Demeter!* a fig's end for 'em! With the exception of a few fine passages occasionally sparkling among many bad, we neither of us would exchange our second-rate efforts in that department of the drama, for the whole of his clubbed together. But his songs are often sweet, and

as melodious as the harp of Æolus struck by the airy fingers of the Zephyrs. I will hardly acknowledge his superiority to me in the masterdom of pathos, nor in the judicious introduction of philosophical sentiments. Nevertheless, both Sophocles and myself cannot but be sincere admirers of the profundity, and exuberant variety of his genius.

Fortunate Shakspeare! when the case of my spirit was mangled by dogs, my countrymen thought they did a great thing in erecting a mound of earth over my remains, in the road to the Piræus; but thou art happy in having thy merit signalized by a nobler monument! Thou hast our hearty votes for its completion, and were we upon earth, we would cheerfully subscribe to it a *talent* each, as a proof of our respect for thy *talents*; notwithstanding that thou hast satirized Homer, the sacred fountain of our inspirations, in an extravagant production, which Thespis would almost have been ashamed to own.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF ARISTOPHANES

appears.

I have reason to fear, O *Brettanians!* that your poet has contrived to surpass me in pure comedy drawn from nature; but in satiric comedy, which identifies with itself known characters, whether rational or brute, *Bekekex, koax, koax*, "*I have him on the hip*," to use a phrase in his own works, which caught my eye lately, as I was walking by the crystal fountains, arm in arm with Menander. One of the advantages I have over him (and I have frequently compared, in the Elysian avenues, his comic productions with my own), was the wider field afforded at Athens for comedy, by the absurd passions attributed by my countrymen to their deities; of which I have not failed to profit in my *Birds*, my *Frogs*, and my *Plutus*. We both agreed that his powers must have been extraordinary, and that had he flourished our cotemporary in Hellas, we should have been cruelly jealous of them. You have Menander's (he charged

me to tell you) and my votes for a monument worthy of his merits. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF PLAUTUS *appears.*

Though your poet's comic powers may equal mine, *Britanni!* I would have you bear in mind, (neither will you be able to convict me of *errors* in my assertion,) that he robbed me of my *Mencæchmi*. In spite of his theft, the ingenious rogue has my heart-felt vote for a monument; and were I upon earth, I would count down three drachmas, as my share in the subscription—*Ædepol!* a round sum for Accius Plautus, who was always poor.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF TERENCE *appears.*

For some time past, O *Britanni!* the portals of the ivory gates have resounded with "*Shakspeare!*" "*Shakspeare!*" "*Shakspeare!*"

I was determined in consequence, in my cool asphodel retreat, to compare, *sine irâ et studio*, his comic powers with my own; in doing which, I have had no small trouble, blending as he often does promiscuously his comic and tragic scenes. Had I done so in my productions, I fear they would have come off but very ill at the Megalensian games. Somehow or other, he has contrived to beat me in *vis comica*; and his characters, generally speaking, are more strongly pourtrayed than mine. But in chastened comedy, supported throughout by elegant diction, I leave him far behind. Neither will I allow, in reference to comedy alone, that he was a greater man than myself; for you should recollect, that though born in Africa, I contrived to produce plays which were admired by the first wits of Rome, and called forth, *medius-fidius!* the enthusiastic approbation of Cæsar. My shade even now remembers with rapture, the complimentary verses of such a man! Your proposed building, *Britanni!* to the memory of Shakspeare, flatters me with the belief that the nations of

the earth still recompense nobly well-attested dramatic genius; and I have to thank you, for having painted my statue on the *proscenium* of your principal theatre.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF LOPE DE VEGA DEL
CARPIO *appears.*

Know, *Gentilhombres Ingleses!* that friendship for your Shakspeare alone has induced me to present myself here. Our shades are much together in the Elysian fields, whether from an indefinable secret sympathy, or from our having been cotermporaries upon earth, I know not; but it is even so. He often tells me kindly, that he prefers my society to that of the other dramatic poets. If ever he chances to meet the shades of Racine and Corneille in the great avenue of the poets, a blank silence ensues on either side; "*nec magis moventur, quàm si dura silex, aut stet Marpesia cautes;*" owing not to a contempti-

ble jealousy on either side, but to a want of a spontaneously-flowing sympathy. It was but lately that my friend expressed to me a regret, that, when on earth, he did not blot more, and thereby secure a less disputed title to fame. "Fame!" I retorted, "hast thou not quaffed
 " a good cup-full already, *Guillelmo*? Your
 " countrymen are not more fastidious than
 " mine. England and Spain must take the
 " dross with the ore of our respective produc-
 " tions. If you talk of blotting, Apollo and
 " the Muses know that I have even more need
 " of it than you. I'll cure your qualms," I
 added, "by informing you, that your country-
 " men are preparing to raise a monument to
 " your memory—*Continuò auditæ voces* res-
 " pecting it, near the ivory portals; and I have
 " to request your leave to fly to earth, to give
 " it my sanction." " 'Twill be Love's Labour
 " Lost! my dear Lope," he replied with some
 warmth, "for they've bruited me enough, and
 " I've had more of the bubble reputation than
 " I ever bargained for. Leave 'em to make
 " as Much Ado About Nothing as they list.

“ But you leer eagerness with your eyes—As
 “ You Like It, then.—Will charters this
 “ earnest of your good-will with What You
 “ Will.”

We then conversed on other subjects, and strolled to the great asphodel bank, close to the diamond grottoes. He there lay down, and fell asleep. Eftsoons came his own fairy sprites, fanning his temples with their transparent pinions; and I left Titania busied in heaping a pillow of musk-roses for his head, ever and anon whispering in his ears, “ *My gentle joy!*” Then stole I softly away, steered my flight to the triple gates, which turned spontaneously on their hinges at my approach, and behold—here I am! The shade of Lope de Vega demands a monument on earth to his Elysian friend and companion, the genius of your isle! *Y asi diciendo, vivan ustedes mil años!*

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF MOLIERE *appears.*

Boileau et moi-même, Messieurs, (je vois que ma présence vous frappe ; toutefois, l'ombre de Poquelin n' a rien de tragique,) ayans beaucoup entendu parler de votre Shakspeare tant vanté, dans la grande allée des poètes aux Champs Elysées, nous avons comparé ensemble ses ouvrages comiques avec les miens ; et nous sommes presque d'accord, que peut-être je n'ai pas développé un *seul* caractère si heureusement conçu, et si eminemment comique, que son *Falstaff*, surtout tel qu'il le fait paroître dans les *Commères de Windsor*. L'intrigue de mes pièces pourtant, est mieux soutenue que chez lui ; et vous pouvez vous assurer, que malgré la force du génie de votre pöete, je ne voudrois pas donner mon *Avare*, mes *Fourberies de Scapin*, mon *Tartuffe*, et mes *Femmes Sçavantes*, pour tout ce qu'il a écrit dans le genre comique. Nous ne contemplons pas sans intêret cependant, le monument que vous projetez à sa gloire ; et je conseillerais à mes compatriotes de faire la meme chose pour

Corneille et Racine dans les lieux de leur naissance; puisque la guerre, leur métier favori, leur manque dans ce moment-ci. Vous pouvez vous étonner à la vérité, que nous nous intéressons à la gloire de votre Shakspeare; mais il est certain, que malgré quelques grossièretés, l'apanage de son siècle, il avoit un génie supérieur; d'ailleurs, nous autres pöetes, (Dieu merci!) nous ne sommes plus tourmentés de rivalités odienses.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF MILTON *appears, blind.*

What needs my Shakspeare for his honour'd
bones,
The labour of an age in piled stones?
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a star y-pointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory! great heir of fame!
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy
name!

Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
For whilst to the shame of slow-endavouring
art,
Thy easy numbers flow ; and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took ;
Then thou our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving ;
And so sepulchred in such pomp dost lie,
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.
(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF DRYDEN *appears.*

Let the monument be towering and spacious; for, of all poets, the bard of Avon was gifted with the most aspiring and comprehensive mind. *(Vanishes.)*

SHADE OF POPE *appears.*

Take, without more ado, the poetic wing
of my Temple of Fame. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF THOMSON *appears.*

I rush from the Elysian groves, (and trust you will not deem my presence unseasonable,) to encourage you with my vote, and suggest an idea on this occasion, which must touch every British poet's heart. I propose that you plan a building in the Grecian style, and erect it on "*thy hill, delightful Sheen!*" exhibiting a statue of Britannia in the midst, pointing with her right hand to a bust of Shakspeare, and holding in her left a scroll, inscribed—

" *Is not wild Shakspeare mine and Nature's boast?*"

I think this a fit spot for the monument; first, because it is beautiful; secondly, it is at once suburban and subrural; characteristic as it were of the genius of the poet of the Avon,

which riots in cities, as well as among the wildest scenes of nature. Poets have claimed, time out of mind, and obtained too, a sort of vanity-license from the high Court of Apollo; I shall therefore offer no *Apology* either in verse or prose, for suggesting a plan, in which *my* muse is somewhat concerned; and which struck me as I was lately strolling in the *same walk* as Delille,* in a sequestered part of the Elysian fields. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF VOLTAIRE *appears.*

Qu'on le représente donc comme son propre *Culiban*, tenant dans la main droite son *Hamlet*, dans l'autre, une carte de son *île de Bohême*. Qu'on mette à ses pieds une statue d'Aristote, preuve de son respect pour lui. Puisqu'il est hors de toute règle lui-même, il faut que son monument le soit aussi. Mettez donc les

* Thomson and Delille were men of the *same walk* in poetry.

bases des colonnes en haut, et les chapiteaux en bas. Que le sculpteur n'oublie pas non plus, de mettre à ses pieds, nos pauvres Corneilles, Racine, et Molière, apprenans de lui de nouvelles méthodes pour la conduite de leurs drames. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF DIDEROT *appears.*

Tiens, tiens, Voltaire! réprime ta satire mordante. Qu'on nous le donne plutôt comme le grand Saint Christophe de Nôtre-Dame, aux jambes colossales, et s'avançant à pas de géant sur la terre. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF D'ALEMBERT *appears.*

Je me souviens que quand j'étois sur la terre, j'ai lu dans la narration de quelque voyageur en Sicile, qu'il y avoit un prince de ce pays-là, doué d'un génie actif, mais bizarre; qui a bâti un palais non loin de Palerme,

rempli de statues grotesques, et mal-proportionnées. Prenez son palais pour le monument de votre poëte. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF LA HARPE *appears.*

Malgré quelques scènes heureuses, quelques éclairs de génie, je ne sçaurois jamais mettre en parallèle le mérite de votre Shakspeare, avec celui des grands dramatises François. Votre obstination à son égard, m'a toujours paru singulière. Comment préférer son monstre de *Hamlet*, son fou de *Léar*, et son *Jules César*, qui, chez lui, n'est qu'un capitain de bandits, au *Caton* d'Addison, et à la *Venise Sauvée* d'Otway! J'ai reconnu pourtant, dans mon *Cours de Littérature*, quelques perles jetées ça et là dans son enorme fumier; et il faut avouer que son génie, tout bizarre qu'il est, mérite un monument, puisqu'il a obtenu tant d'autorité chez vous.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF GRAY *appears.*

I have to apologize for suggesting to the Committee a hint afforded by my Progress of Poesy. Would the sculptor of the monument do amiss (I speak with diffidence) in representing great Nature giving the keys of the human heart to the immortal boy?

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF GARRICK *appears, with sparkling eyes.*

What! my sweet Willy-o in at last for a monument worthy of his greatness! This is as it should be. But I charge the Committee, whatever plan they may adopt, to remember that Stratford is his birth-place, and to bear in mind the injunction that he left you, not to disturb his bones.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF MADEMOISELLE
CLAIRON *appears.*

Je n'ai jamais pu apprécier au juste, le génie du pöete Anglois. Tout ce que j'en sçais est, que quand mon cher Garrick et moi, nous jouâmes nos rôles respectifs dans mes appartemens à Paris, tantôt il m'a attendri jusqu'aux larmes, tantôt il m'a fait frissonner d'horreur. Je conclus donc, avec beaucoup de vraisemblance, que votre Shakspeare, malgré quelques bizarreries, est un diamant de la première eau. Il mérite sans doute, un beau monument. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF WARBURTON *appears.*

Let the monument be Greek, and let it be illustrated with inscriptions in the same dialect. Every honorary building, without them, especially if Grecian, must be nonsense, a monstrous architectural abortion, tickling solely the senses, not addressing the mind. If I

found it expedient to strike the mental eye of the reader of the poet's text, with Greek citations, it is not easy to imagine that what meets the somatic vision merely, can hit the mind without inscriptions at least in that noble language. Let the architect take a circular temple with thirty-eight columns; let each be inscribed with one of the poet's dramas in Greek, after this manner: *Hee Tragōdia Iorkana, Metron anti Metrou, Hōsper Thelete, Dodekatee Niux*, and so forth. Let his statue (something in the style of Michael Angelo's *Moses*,) be inscribed—

Saxperiō Hiupsistō Megistō.

Every thing then is intelligible at a glance.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF JOHNSON *appears.*

I see no reason for any inscriptions, much less Greek. Our Shakspeare was an aboriginal Briton. Such is the ubiquity of his genius,

so active is the propagation of his dramatic efforts through the medium of our typical foundries, that a monument without any inscription, will prove a sort of relief to the public mind, so overwhelmed as it is by the poet's works. There is a highly expressive silence. (*Vanishes, growling.*)

SHADE OF MALONE *appears.*

The sculptor perhaps will do well to take his likeness from the bust in Stratford church, the effect of which I heightened, by giving it a coat of white paint. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF STEEVENS *appears.*

The gentleman is equally unfortunate, whether in painting the bust of the poet, or in commenting his works. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF SUSANNA SHAKSPEARE.

favourite daughter of the poet, appears.

Why trouble yourselves, good gentlemen, about my dear father, more than you already have done? Is not your admiration of his works his noblest mausoleum? Suffer his own Susanna to remind you that he has already two monuments to his memory. Had he none, he died in the religion of his country, and is amply satisfied with having instructed and delighted it with his writings. Your own hearts will explain my appearance among you on this occasion. And could I absent myself—I, his favourite Susanna, whom, when on earth, he loved so tenderly?

(Vanishes, weeping.)

SHADE OF JOHN-A-COMBE *appears.*

Be sure you represent him in a marble-relief standing behind an oak, and taking

his aim at a buck in Sir Thomas Lucy's park. When on earth, I knew the rogue well; and he was as clever a deer-stealer as any in the county of Warwick. I owe him this hit for the epitaph, in which he sent me to the devil. But cloven-footed Satan concerns now neither deer-stealing Will, nor the plain yeoman of Stratford—John-a-Combe. (*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF VITTORIO ALFIERI

appears.

Le due volte ch'io sono stato in Inghilterra, ho riconosciuto che il merto del vostro Shakspeare era ben fondato. Non abbiamo che'l nostro Alighier, chi si può paragonar con ello, e per la profondità de' pensieri, e per l'altezza del stile. Date un monumento semplice e sublime, a quel gran maestro del cuor umano, quel Ercole della tragedia, chi m'ha vinto nel genio sì, ma non nel giudizio, nè nella scienza di buon ordine teatrale; chi

ha incatenato nelle sue opere, le due fere donne, ah! lasso! le mie due furie spaventevoli—Ira, e Malinconia.

(*Svanisce fremebondo.*)

SHADE OF R. B. SHERIDAN *appears.*

Ben Jonson, Colley Cibber, and myself, have just finished a bowl of nectar in the poets' walk of the Elysian fields. Quoth Ben, "Let us drink success to the monument, which is about to be erected to the applause, delight, and wonder of the stage;" in which Cibber and myself heartily joined. You are aware that when I was among you, I yielded to no one in admiration of Shakspeare; but I will not trouble the Committee with any hints respecting the proposed monument, whether or no it should be simple, or splendid, whether or no it should be embossed with the poet's armorial bearings; for I was well enough satisfied with his monument at Old Drury; when

the Shakspeare crest and arms were so appropriately supported by John Kemble and his sister.

(*Vanishes.*)

THE CHAIRMAN,

After a pause of five minutes.

The members of the *sub-committee*, “whose bones are marrowless, whose blood is cold,” appear now to give us some respite. If your patience be not exhausted, I crave your attention to extracts from three letters lately come to hand.

Extract of a Letter from

VINCENZO M——I.

Omero, il nostro Dante, ed il vostro Shakspeare, sono i soli poeti dotati dal vero estro divino. Tre sono i poeti del mondo; tre dunque siano i monumenti della Santa Trinità del Parnasso.

Extract of a Letter from

T——A.

——Prenez un beau bloc de marbre Grec. Faites-le s'asseoir parmi les grands poètes dramatiques, tant anciens, que modernes, jouissans, chacun, de la gloire qui leur est due, et se reposans amicalement dans un séjour délicieux des Champs Elysées.

Extract of a Letter from

WILHELM S——L.

Of three volumes, which I have dedicated to an analysis of ancient and modern dramatic literature, your Shakspeare nearly engrosses one ; a sufficient proof of the esteem in which I hold his talents. I would erect at Stratford, a small amphitheatre, and place in the centre a statue of the poet ; and let his canopy be the skies. Represent himself standing in a *biga* drawn by two *Pegasi*, Melpomene guiding

one, and Thalia the other, with this inscription in gold letters on the *biga*—

GENIO

INSULARUM BRITANNICARUM.

SHADE OF MADAME DE S——L

appears.

L'idée de mon ami est sublime à la vérité; mais je prendrois plutôt un bâtiment gothique, aussi imposant que vous voulez, mais d'un plan irrégulier; dans lequel, cinq ou six grandes fenêtres peintes de mille couleurs, répandent une clarté merveilleuse, et font un effet prodigieux; tandis que la lumière ne pénètre qu'à peine par les autres, serrées de grilles, et de grandeur inégale; pour exprimer à la fois, la sublimité austère, la variété étonnante, et la conduite défectueuse des pièces de votre Shakspeare.

(*Vanishes.*)

SHADE OF PORSON *appears.*

I just left the Scaligers, Bentley, and Casaubon, in high dispute about Shakspeare, in the critics' walk of the Elysian fields. My appearance on this occasion cannot surprize you, since most here present are aware that, when on earth, I had Shakspeare as much as my own dear Euripides at heart, and by heart. This is not the place for me to insist on the "*mens divinius*," or on the "*cùm flueret lutulentus, erat quod tollere velles.*" Let it suffice to know, that the shade of Richard Porson votes for a Greek monument.

(*Vanishes.*)

THE CHAIRMAN.

What! will the line of the Shades stretch out to the crack of doom? Start eyes! how many more?

A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE,
*and Actor of the first Witch at
 Covent-Garden.*

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to propose an antidote for the ghosts,—an efficacious one, I ween, in the shape of a Tureen of Negus. The vapours of this cauldron, more genial than the witches', shall no doubt dispel them.

Yes—our cauldron shall burn clearer—
 Waiter! twelve bottles of Madeira!
 Squeeze Seville oranges a score;
 Add lemon-chips; grate nutmegs four.
 Of sugar-candy put one pound;
 So shall our charm be firm and sound.
 To settle all superfluous scum,
 By spoonfuls burn one pint of rum.
 Pour, the ghosts away to drive,
 Of boiling water gallons five.
 The pow'r of steam on earth we know;
 Let's try it on the shades below.
 Add cloves a few; and (damn the trouble!)
 A genial beverage boil and bubble.

A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE,
*and Actor of the second Witch at
 Drury-Lane.*

While you about the Negus go,
 My office too I'll deftly shew.—
 Take pounds twice five of wheaten flour,
 And on the mass thrice sifted pour
 Of Devon's clouted cream one pint;
 With half as much orgeat anoint.
 Slic'd in square lumps, five quinces add,
 And rose-serve, to make us glad.
 Let proper interval be given,
 To candied citrons hash'd eleven.
 Put in thrice twelve pistachio kernels,
 (Peel 'em, the rind our lips will burn else.)
 In lieu of currants, (vulgar fare!)
 Dried cherries scatter here and there.
 Let yolks of twice six eggs new laid
 With golden slime the dough pervade.
 A spirit-zest t'impair, in eke throw
 One pint of cream from Martinico.

In mystic oven clap and bake
 'Th' ingredients of the *Shakspeare Cake*—
 Old *Twelfth* 'twill surely jealous make.

}

[*The table sinks, and presently re-appears, with the Bowl of Negus and Shakspeare Cake, which are handed round to the Committee.*]

MARMADUKE STURTON, *owner of
 the site of the Globe Theatre.*

When I rose this mor.....

THE CHAIRMAN, *interrupting him.*

Our dispelling charms, I see, are firm and good; and I congratulate the Committee in at last being able to collect opinions more material to our purpose, and less immaterial, than those with which we have been hitherto favoured. Mr. Sturton, when you please, Sir.

MARMADUKE STURTON.

Gentlemen, when I rose this morning, nothing was further from my thoughts, than the idea of troubling you with any suggestions on my part, relative to the proposed monument to Shakspeare; but lo! as the breakfast-urn was hissing on the table, my daughter Wilhelmina, a bit of a harebrain to be sure, came running into the room, and saying—"Well, papa, have you not read the advertisement about Shakspeare's monument?" "No," I replied. "Well but, papa, it particularly concerns us," she added, "since I have always heard that the Globe Theatre, where our poet himself performed, and as some say, held the spectators' horses, stood in our premises." She produced, at the same time, a drawing of her own, pressing me so incessantly to present it to the Committee, that I could not quiet her, but by promising that I would do as she requested; cautioning her at the same time, not to feed her vanity with the hope of its being adopted. You see, Mr.

Chairman (*handing the drawing*), the design exhibits a plain Doric column supporting a *Globe*, surmounted with a statue of our poet, which my daughter advises you to place in my premises. She says, the plan she proposes, may be considered equally allegorical of the *Globe Theatre*, and of the theatrical *Globe* or *World*, of which Shakspeare is, in England at least, the avowed sovereign. The idea appears to me fair enough for a girl of sixteen; and whether acceptable or no, your goodness, I am sure, will pardon a father's indulgence to a daughter on such an occasion.

FRANK CRIB, *owner of the Butcher's
Shop at Stratford-upon-Avon.*

Plase your honors, I ba but a plain Englishman—'scuse the liberty I take in coming up to Lunnum to trouble you. Though I ba not much customed to these matters—but, (*scratching his head*) why I thinks, that as I

owns the house in which Shakspeare was born, it ba but right that you make a purchase of it and the ground, for the moniment to stand; the sitivation being as good as any in all Stratford. If you ax the price, your honors—to spake conshentious now—why I thinks two thousand pounds will ba but fair in these haired tax-times, your honors; and if you plase to give to honest Frank the kape of the moniment—why now, to ax as low a price as I can, two and sixpence a head to see it, will be only a trifle for gemmen, your honors. Sister's suds, to kape the pillows nate, will come to nain or ten shillings a week in these 'spensive times—now, I ingage, if you plase to trust me the kay, to kape the moniment so clane, that the smock of the hansomst and richest bride in all Stratford, in her way to church, shall be sut to it, your honors; beside, my house is almost ruinated, and the walls so writ over with names; that gemmen have no more room to write theirs', your honors. 'Scuse me for loving the character of our dair Will, better than my own int'rest, and my fam'ly int'rest,

and the int'rest of all the county of Warwick, and the int'rest of all England put to that—but as how, if you don't please to have my arty hoffer, all I have to say is, that our good Will shall have my best will, your honors.

DANIEL WOOLRICH TUPPER YEO,
a South-Down Grazier.

Though I can read in your eyes, Gentlemen, before I begin to address you, that a grazier must be a sort of fish out of water in a Committee of this description, your goodness, I am sure, will pardon me, for having come post-haste from my farm at Harting, to suggest a plan for the monument of our great Shakspeare. You must know that, when a young man, I had no relish for the profession of a grazier; but happening to turn one day over the pages of our poet, I dipped on his charming description of a shepherd's life, which so tickled my fancy, that, from that

moment, I became a shepherd in my heart; while before I was one but in name. Neither would I barter my condition now, for any that the world can offer. People who are as much struck with Shakspeare as myself, will no doubt be surprized that my plan aspires to nothing so grand as marble, stone, or the more homely brick. To be brief, I hold, Gentlemen, that Will Shakspeare could have been nothing more or less than a shepherd; that is to say, he must have been a shepherd in his soul, or he could not have painted rustic life so cleverly and neatly as he has done. Therefore, I hope you will not think my plan absurd, if I propose that his monument should be placed at Harting, in the heart of the South-Downs, and consist of one hundred unbarked trunks of beech-trees, with a plain but stoutly thatched roof, having two weathercocks at top, moving on the same iron rod, one as usual, the other with the letters, 'W. S. P. N. that is, *William Shakspeare, Poet of Nature*; and so contrived, that letter S. may face letter N.; both weathercocks indicating to the beholder

the direction of the wind, and that Shakspeare is as true to nature as the wind is to the quarter from which it blows. I would place his statue, carved in oak, in the centre, represented as a shepherd. The door-way should be “o’ercanopied with luscious woodbine,” to use his own words, and a small avenue of sweet-william should mark the approach to the porch, other garden flowers smiling around in profusion—poppy, valerian, and wormwood excepted. Forgive a plain grazier, Gentlemen, for presuming to lay before you his ideas on this occasion.

PETER OGEE, *an Architect of York.*

If ever a favourable opportunity presented itself, Gentlemen, for whetting the geniuses of British architects and sculptors, that surely is the present one. If you will please to honour me with the erection of the proposed building, I hope to be able to gratify the public taste,

by inventing an order which shall not bear the remotest affinity to the Antediluvian, Egyptian, Persian, Siculo-Etruscan, Tuscan, Greek, Roman, Saxon, pointed Tudor, unpointed Plantagenet, Elizabethan, or any, in short, hitherto known. 'The French,' you probably, Gentlemen, are aware, thought in the reign of Louis XIV. to eclipse the solar blaze of Grecian taste, by imagining a new architectural order. What did they do? Why, they clapped a cock with extended wings between the Corinthian volutes, perched him on the acanthus-leaves, and denominated this effort of genius the *French order*. I hope to be able to prove that my intended *Shaksperian order* shall be more original, and display unhatched and unfledged capitals, worthy of our cock-poet's crested and capital genius. I propose, in the entablature, to omit the *cima reversa*; for I hold that nothing topsy-turvy should appear in a monument to Shakspeare. But I will not broach any more of my ideas at present; for they will be made more intelligible by drawings. As for the situation of the

monument, I do not think you can do better, Gentlemen, than commission me to place it on the summit of Wharncote, the highest mountain in Yorkshire, and, as some say, in all England. It is generally acknowledged that our poet's genius was heavenly; now he cannot stand much nearer heaven in our island, than on the spot just mentioned. The building too, sometimes seen shining in the clear blue expanse, sometimes lost in dark clouds, will convey to thinking spectators a true type of his genius, which, as the critics tell us, is one moment bright and gay, another, stern and obscure.

**NATHANIEL ARDEN, a Master-Builder
of Feversham.**

I am not much accustomed to speaking in public, Gentlemen, but as I hold that I am descended in a right line from the *Arden*; who figures in one of our poet's early perform-

ances, I offer that as my apology for suggesting that Feversham puts in full as good a claim to the honour of building a monument to Shakespeare, as any other town in the British dominions. If you ask the proofs of my descent from the interesting Arden, all I have to say is, that my father told me so ; my grandfather, him ; my great-grandfather, him ; and my great-great-grandfather, him ; proofs as good, to my mind, as any parchment roll that can be produced. Besides, I am of opinion, that as our poet is a marked man, it is fit that his monument should be remarkable in every way. Now, by placing it near Feversham, you will make it at once both a land-mark, and sea-mark ; a land-mark for the wits that travel post, and a sea-mark for those who enter the Medway, either on commercial business, or with the view of being poetically sentimental in a steam-boat. I propose that a colossal statue of the poet be erected on a tower, like that at the North Foreland, holding a large patent reverberating sinumbra lamp, (such as I purchased in the Strand the other day for my

wife,) a pleasing and shadowless emblem of the drama, which, as every body knows, reverberates life and manners. If you please to commit the execution of the monument to me, I will at least answer to carve on the keystone of the door-way a colossal head of my interesting ancestor *Arden*, and give him to boot a countenance at once ardent and expressive.

CHRISTIAN GUILDESTERN, *a Danish Merchant, long resident in London.*

'The bales, Gentlemen, that I am constantly shipping for the Scaggerac and Cattegat, leave me but little leisure for the cultivation of the fine arts. Allow me however to suggest, that if you purpose to adopt a statue to commemorate your immortal poet, few artists will be better capable of doing it justice than my distinguished countryman, justly surnamed, at Copenhagen, the *Phidias* of the North. The

scene of one of the most striking of Shakespeare's dramas lies, you are aware, in Denmark; and is not a full quarter of the British blood, Danish? As for the other candidate sculptors, whosoever they may be, what can they do in comparison? "Can they have the motive and the cue for passion," that a genuine Dane can have? "Lord Hamlet is a prince out of their sphere," but he happens to be in a Dane's. I conjure the Committee not to disdain a Dane.

FRANCESCO-ASSISI CARTUZZO,

*a Venetian Gentleman on a visit
in London.*

Ah! il cigno divino dell' Avona! Cosa strepitosa assai pel scarpello del nostro Canova, se la morte non l'avrebbe tolto! Il principe de' poeti Inglesi indubitamente avrebbe ottenuto una nuova immortalità dal principe de' scultori del nostro secolo! Ha lasciato

però in Roma alcuni discepoli degni forse di lavorare il monumento proposto. Io, Signori miei, sono Veneziano, e quasi compatriota del *Otello*, del *Romeo*, del *Scilocco*, del *Iachimo*, e di molt' altri eroi del vostro Shakspeare. Posso dire in verità che il poeta immortale fu più di mezzo-Italiano—tanto bene ha descritto i nostri costumi!

MARIE-ANNE XAVIER HIPPOLYTE
TRANCHANT, *Sculptor*,

*On a visit in London, but residing at Paris,
No. 9999, Rue Neuve des bons Enfans,
au premier.*

Messieurs! excusez mes transports. Une sainte ardeur s'empare de mon ame, en prononçant le nom même de votre adorable poëte. Depuis ma plus tendre enfance, ses ouvrages ont fait mon bonheur. Mes talents pour la

sculpture ne peuvent pas vous être inconnus. En sollicitant donc vos suffrages pour l'honneur d'immortaliser moi même votre divin Saksperque dis-je? *votre Saksper.* Je dirai plutôt *notre Saksper*, oui Messieurs, *le notre.* N'est ce pas qu'une forte moitié de ses scènes est posée en France? Par conséquent, il est à nous comme à vous. Dans quels vers sublimes, grand dieu! n'a t-il pas célébré notre belle Catherine, femme de votre Henri V.! De plus, il l' a fait parler François; oui, Messieurs! et notre pucelle d' Orleans, et la grande Marguerite d' Anjou, et Constance, épouse de votre Jean-sans-terre, et la belle et bonne Blanche, mère de Saint Louis, et tant d' autres de nos rois, reines, et généraux! N' ayez pas peur, Messieurs, fiez-vous à moi; je connois mes forces, vous serez contents de mes travaux; je réponds pour les vrais connoisseurs, et pour toute la compagnie du jardin du Couvent. Messieurs! c' est Saksper seul qui a fertilisé le sol de mon esprit. (*Rapping snuff-box thrice.*)

SHADE OF MRS. MONTAGUE

appears.

Il a fertilisé donc un sol bien ingrat.

(Vanishes.)

THE CHAIRMAN.

I must resign the chair, Gentlemen, if measures more effectual than the negus-cauldron, or Shakspeare cake, be not taken to put a stop to this intrusion of the shades into the committee-room. God knows we have had a good dose of them; and your patience, as well as mine, must be on the wane. I see the crack to the left, effected by the lightning, under the cornice of the ceiling, just over Monsieur Tranchant's head, through which it is evident they make their entrances and exits. I propose that this hole be instantly stopped with putty.

SEVERAL VOICES.

Let it be stopped—let it be stopped. The glazier, ho !

[*A glazier is sent for, and the chink is stopped with putty.*]

THE CHAIRMAN.

Now, Gentlemen, I hope our business will proceed without any more interruptions from the *Elysian fields*, the *diamond grottoes*, or the *crystal fountains*. And I have wondered this half hour, that you have been able to keep the rose-lipped cherub Patience smiling quietly on your knees, while mine has been fidgeted with the rickets: Mr. Flagel, my eye catches your's, Sir.

OBADIAH FLAGEL, *a Schoolmaster of
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.*

Gentlemen, the intervals of leisure afforded me by my school-vacations have partly been devoted to the cultivation of the *literæ elegantiores*. Enthusiastic from my boyhood, in my admiration of the Avonian bard, I hailed with inexpressible satisfaction, the projected monument to his glory. But we are here assembled, not to pronounce panegyrics on our favourite poet, which have engrossed so many pens and tongues, but to receive and consider plans for the monument in question. Our theatrical managers, tired, it would appear, of marshalling horses on the stage, have determined, by the late adoption of glass-curtains, to follow our poet's injunction in good earnest, in holding mirrors, not perhaps so much up to nature as heretofore, but up to us spectators.

We have always heard, Gentlemen, that actors on the stage were *veluti in speculo*; but it would appear that *veluti* may henceforth be

dropped from the drop-scene, since they are literally now *in speculo seipso*. We have no need then to regret (and I congratulate the actors that their profession is made so compendious,) the Garricks, Cibbers, Pritchards, Hendersons, Bellamys, Abingtons, or Kembles; since it follows, as a corollary, that our performers, having no awkward *veluti* in their way, must be better now than any that ever appeared, inasmuch as reality surpasses similitude. But to the point in question; for these glass-curtains have afforded me an useful hint. I was thinking, that if a monument be raised to our poet, placing his statue in the centre, and all round it mirrors so disposed, as to reflect his figure ten thousand times, the effect of this *Myriadiconoptron Shaksperiense* would be equally elegant and appropriate, reflecting as it would the "*myriad mind*"—mind, I do not say the "*myriad-minded man*," like the news-paper advertisement for the subscription; for then, divine Berkeley! I should fall out with thee. And how can I consistently do that, convinced as I

am with thee, that matter is a mere modification of mind? Gentlemen, whether my plan appear feasible or no, you will at least allow it not to harmonize ill with the character of that great genius whose works, like one vast mirror, reflect all the passions and conditions of mankind.

MELCHISEDECH LEVI, *residing*
No. 239, Old Jewry.

I shее no reashon at all, Shentlemen, why you shood trooble the pooblic to shubscribe on sooch an occasion. What have the dead to do weeth the pooblic poorsh? Speshally in sooch times, when the takshes presh so hard on the poor, and when the three per shents are so heigh, that monish-people can feend no nook to creep in; and the Alley is fool of lame dukes. But shupposing oor poorshes were well feeled, wash, I ashk, thish poeet Shakspeare, a shinchere freend to the housh of

David? I guesh not; and theenk that if hish mush had inshpired heem prophetically, to wreet a play on Sholomon in all hish gloree, he woud have painted heem noothing more or less than King Sheelock—yesh, Shentlemen, you may laugh,—King Sheelock. For thish reashon, I weel shubscribe noothing; no, not oon groat; no, not oon penny; no, not oon hapenny; no, not oon ferthing. Perhaps you may shucceed better weeth my keenshwomen in Old Shewry; for I know he hash geeven oor leetel Shessica preetily enoof. Ash for myshelf, the firsht day I deen on a shpare-reeb of pork, I promish to pay feefty poond, ash my share in the shubscripshon.

GIOVANNI.

Take a temple surrounded by red tin-foil columns, emblematic of the fire of his genius, and entwined with laurels of the same material. Place round it metallic trees with

fiery fruit, which a green and yellow dragon, that is, the dæmon of jealousy, in vain endeavours to pluck.

MADEMOISELLE N——,
*Danseuse de l' Opera à Paris, on a visit
 in London.*

Faites bâtir donc, Messieurs, un joli temple, tout-à-fait joli, du plus beau marbre blanc, tel qu'on voit au petit Trianon. Entourez-le de fontaines charmantes, comme celles de Saint-Cloud, et de jolis bosquets, comme à Fontenay-aux-roses. Placez le buste de votre poëte au milieu du temple, et au-dessus de lui, la statue d'une belle nymphe, dont la robe est de la plus légère soierie de Lyon, aux garnitures de myrte et de roses, qui en pirouettant, le couronne de lauriers. Mettez à ses côtés deux petits Cupidons, l'un qui pleure, l'autre qui rit, pour exprimer les effets de cette belle passion, qu'il a si bien décrite, à

ce qu'on dit. J'ai déjà soulagé les Irlandais, Messieurs; il ne me faut qu'un autre bénéfice, pour prouver mon amour pour votre poëte chéri.

PELAGIO DIMITRI, *a Greek Merchant of Patras.*

I understand English little, Gentlemen; have been in London only months four, to make pity for countrymen mine murdered at Scio. If you will help Athenians and Albanians in heart good, to drive barbarous and infidel *Tourkoi* to Asia-side of Archipelago, I will answer on head mine, that New-Greece government will grant bit of ground on Parnassus mountain. I will motion it in our Areopagus-council, when it named be. I advise that the chosen place for your Sophocles English monument be over Delphi ancient, between the points of the mountain, that being place high for genius high.

SAMUEL GRIM,

*Plug-turner of the Pipes which supply the
Theatre with Gas.*

Forgive me, Gentlemen, for troubling you with my opinion; but an idea struck me, as I was shoveling coal yesterday into the gas-furnash, which may perhaps be of some use. I was thinking, if the building be of cast-iron, shut up during the day, and well lit with gas after sunset, shewing in the inside the names of Shakspeare's plays in gas, and his own in large letters hung from the roof in the middle, in gas likewise, the effect might be grand and striking; particular, if we take to mind that his genus shines more by night than by day. If the building should communicate to our furnash, you may rely on my word, I'll take care to draw off the clearest gas, and keep the lights so clear, that people's eyes shall water as they look at them; that the inside, in short, shall be as bright as Shakspeare's genus itself.

PATRICK O'SULIVAN,

*Sometime Student at the College of
Maynooth.*

Professing, as I do, Gentlemen, to be an ardent admirer of the system propagated by the immortal Gall and Spurzheim, I cannot refrain from troubling you with an idea, which struck me, as I was seated by my ancestor's cascade, a few weeks ago, on the lower lake of Killarney. My collection of skulls is, I flatter myself, as complete as any in Ireland; and I have lately enriched my cabinet with the crania of several of the Kerry and Limerick rebels, in which I found the organ of destructiveness sufficiently prominent, and as hard as a *Rock*. I have also, on a particular shelf, several of my fair countrywomen's skulls, all, when living, as loving as they were lovely, and all with the amatory and philoprogenitive bumps projecting like Swiss goitres from behind. Your proposal for a monument to Shakspeare, meets with as much enthusiasm

in Ireland as in the sister-country; and it struck me, that if you were to erect a small rotunda, placing upon a pedestal an ideally perfect skull in marble, with all the bumps in perfect harmony of protuberance, and pass it off for Shakspeare's, the hit would be happy, at once complimentary to the poet, and serving students for a craniological archetype. Much, Gentlemen, is to be envied the Stratford sexton, who, digging a vault a few years since, caught a glimpse of the Shakspearian skull! What a noble opportunity was then afforded for paraphrasing the grave-digger's soliloquy! Without pretending to be able to undertake such a task, allow me to illustrate a theory or two of my own, (I will detain you but shortly,) on this noble science, as yet but *in ovo*, by a reference to the bust before us on the table. Here, Gentlemen, is the amatory bump; here, the imaginative. When our poet's brain was busy with the Juliets, the Violas, the Rosalinds, and the Perditas, I apprehend that his train of mind shot with a reciprocal action from one to the other, like

a shuttlecock driven by two battledores; but when he whispered soft things to the Oxford landlady, the amatory bump was at that moment only in action, though I have no doubt that the imaginative was even then on the alert to play its part. Here is the organ of destructiveness, the fatal bellman, which tolled death to Sir Thomas Lucy's deer. A minute examination of Irish crania flatters me with having discovered a small bump, which, from its proximity to the cerebellum, may account for those notable *bulls* for which my countrymen are so celebrated. If longer experience can establish my theory, I propose to call it the *bull-bump*. It is this, I more than surmise, which twists an idea *wrong* in its passage to the brain, much as an image, when impressed on the retina of the eye, is twisted *right* by the action of the intellect. But much remains to be done in craniology: I will only transgress further on your patience, by suggesting *Cranium admirabile Shakspereiense* as a fit inscription for the monument, which I propose to the memory of our poet.

EZECHIEL HANKEY, *Help to Geoffry
Crayon.*

Perhaps it may startle you, Gentlemen, that I who am a native of Cincinnati on the Ohio, a river, to be sure, not very near the Thames or Avon, should rise to address you on this occasion. But I am encouraged by the consideration, that the tuneful swan of Avon has begun to swim on the Ohio, and bids fair to sound his sweet notes, and spread his rich plumage even on the waters of the Mississippi and Missouri. I guess that he may be even found to nestle by-and-bye at *Harmony* on the Wabash; fascinate with his song the rattle, dog-ribbed, and copper-bellied snakes, and put to a non-plus the pert perroquets, shrill mocking-birds, chattering jackdaws, and screeching cockatoos of our extensive prairies. The Atlantic indeed separates the nest in which this rare and variegated swan was hatched, pretty remotely from us; but the admiration of his genuine and awful notes, is much at *par* on each side of the

yeasty deep, which, though it may “confound and swallow navigation up,” cannot check his flight to the American shores.—For, is he tired with being too long at a time on the wing at home? He perches on the *Hecate* of Liverpool; Kean, master; and like a sly bird, gets a lift for nothing.—Is his plumage somewhat ruffled with the adverse trade-winds? Why, he has been known to squat comfortably on the mainmast of the *Santissimo Iago* of Venice; Cook, master; who, so far from saluting him with a rifle-ball, has been seen to stroke him kindly on the head, feather for him a snug nest in the forecastle, or charter his flight *gratis* through the libertine air.

Desirous of visiting England, the cradle of my ancestors, I accompanied Geoffrey Crayon, (as his *help*, as we say; as his *valet*, as you,) in his classical excursion, which he has given with such success, to the public. And I need not add, that I visited Stratford, and the Boar’s-head in East-cheap, like him, with genuine delight. Your advertisement, Gentlemen, I read the other day in the *Columbia*

coffee-house; and immediately my brain began to work out inventions for the monument; one of which (vanity apart) I hope may prove not unworthy of our mutual theatrical chieftain. I have read, as probably you have done, that Shakspeare's genius leant rather on the comic than tragic side; to speak elegantly, he squeezed and bussed Thalia's hand with rather more ardour than Melpomene's: though, on this head, there may be ample room for doubt. Be it as it may, I was always more partial to laughter, than tears; and cannot help fancying, that that same Boar's-head Tavern will afford an useful hint for his monument. Suppose it were restored, as near as the genius of a knowing builder can go, much as it may be imagined to have been in the reign of your Henry the Fourth. This obtained, the Committee might authorize Mrs. Salmon to set her wits to work, and give us a figure of Shakspeare in wax, in the same attitude as he is painted in the town-hall at Stratford. Why should there not be a *poet of wax* as well as a *cock-of-wax*? A small apartment, with an

Elizabeth sky-lark (*light*, I mean) window, might be allotted solely to the poet. The principal room up-stairs might exhibit the merry knight, the prince, and their crew, regaling themselves at a table with canary-sack, in their appropriate dresses. A neighbouring room might shew Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page antlering their *fat dear*; and a fourth might be devoted to some other of his favourite comic characters. The only objection, Gentlemen, that can be made to this wax-plan is, that, in the dog-days, the fat knight's greasy flesh might melt a little, though whether on paper, on the stage, or in wax, he will never be found, I guess, to inspire his visitors with the "melting mood."

You have, Gentlemen, a plan, neat as imported from the Ohio: the adoption or rejection rests with you..

LANCELOT BLOOD, *Student in Anatomy
at Edinbro'.*

No doubt, Gentlemen, you are aware, as well as myself, that poets "of imagination all compact," as Shakspeare has it, have either adopted themselves, or had adopted for them, certain fantastical paraphernalia, which suit men of their sensitive fibres, but would be ridiculous, if adopted by plain, downright, matter-of-fact minds. When the profound author of the Night Thoughts wrote tragedy, it is related of him, that he used a human skull mounted in silver for his lamp, presented to him by a nobleman for that purpose. So we have heard, that a distinguished poet of our days quaffed in his youth, an inspiring beverage (in which we may guess that coloquintida, mercury, and *aqua fortis* entered) out of a cup formed of a human skull, which probably contributed to impregnate his mind with that saturnine imagery and caustic energy, which pervade the veins and arteries of his creations. Whatever may have been the in-

gredients of his cup, it is certain that when Apollo trepanned him, his Muse did not leap from his brain club-footed. She owns no Vulcan for her sire.

Now, Gentlemen, I am preparing a treatise for the press on transfusion of blood; but am certain that all Edinbro' would scout me, if I, who am no poet, were to quaff a vulture's or wolverene's blood out of a skull, for the sake of gaining induction by experiment for my theory of transfusion. Such goblets suit not us surgical and prosaic men. These and similar ideas struck me, as I was attending a lecture on the anatomy of the heart, a few days since in Edinbro'; when I occasionally relieved my attention with the newspaper of the day, in which your advertisement for a monument to Shakspeare caught my eye. As a human heart was handed round to us in slices, it occurred to me, that since W. Shakspeare equalled at least the Hunters and Corvisarts in cardiac science, he might be aptly represented in marble, holding in his right hand a human heart turned inside out, and

pointing with his left, to all its naked deformity and wretchedness. Excuse me for troubling you on a subject, Gentlemen, prosaically speaking, irrelevant to surgery; but I could not resist from hinting a plan which exhales something of the poetic odour of the skull-lamp and skull-goblet.

JEDEDIAH SCRUPLER, *one of the Order of the Methodists.*

You probably, Gentlemen, will naturally say, on finding that I rise to give my decided negative to any call on the public purse in honour of Shakspeare, “what business then have you here?” My business here, I will immediately reply, is of higher importance than yours. For I hold that England never produced an individual more hostile to the interests of true religion and morality, than this same Shakspeare. That he was a great wit,

and great poet, I am ready to acknowledge; but if you ask my real opinion of his character, I have no hesitation in affirming, that he was nothing more or less than a rascal—a thorough-paced rascal. To conjure up infernal spirits, to lay open all the avenues of vile and corrupt hearts, prove that he himself must have been very conversant with ill. He must have rumbled his belly-full with the apples of the old serpent. What a blessed country would this have proved, had he never existed! To my knowledge, thousands that waste their evenings in the purlieus of Drury and Covent-Garden, were it not for this gaunt harpy-siren, would turn out profitable labourers in thy vineyards, divine Calvin and Wesley! What hundreds of virgins have been weaned from their religion, and families, and exposed to the temptations of the stage, through this poet's intolerable and over-weening influence! Heaven, Gentlemen, has blessed me with a daughter; but, I protest, that I had rather see her busied with the dish-clout in the scullery, than impassioned with Shakspeare. No, Gentlemen, never think

that an ingenious rogue can so get the better of my discernment, as to make me unaware of the disorders occasioned by his licentious genius. And if you respect religion, you will prove on this occasion, your regard for your country, by collecting a subscription for a general bonfire, to consume his pestilential works.

JAMES ALWORTHY, *First Midshipman
of his Majesty's ship the Ariel.*

I am but a plain sailor, Gentlemen of the Committee, but cannot on this occasion refrain from offering my sentiments. Allow me to recommend, without further prologue, that the statue of our noble poet should be of the best heart of British oak, and be placed in the centre of the town of Stratford. If its receptacle were built, as far as propriety will admit, in the shape of a first-rate hulk reversed, the

effect, I think, would not be amiss. It might be easily lighted by thirty-eight windows in the shape of port-holes; the same number, you see, as the poet's plays. The anniversary of his birth might be celebrated by the discharge of a thirty-eight pounder placed at the stern, and fired thirty-eight times; hinting, that if any other dramatic men of war were to come within its range, they would be raked as effectually as the Bucentaur was by Nelson at Trafalgar. Let us hear of no frothy whipsyllabubs from Greece, Italy, or France, to commemorate our poet. The noble-minded fellow! to whom England perhaps owes half her greatness! How often, in heaving to, opposite Dover, have I dwelt on the description of its cliff! How often, as our vessel has scudded seven knots, with her sky-scrappers hoisted, have I remembered the lines of the pretty spirit, whose name she bears! If my plan be adopted, (and your smiles encourage me,) forget not to hoist the British standard from the middle of the hulk. So shall the poet, who has taught me best, after my Bible,

to stand up and fight hard for my God, (*laying his hand on his heart*) my King, and my Country, bid defiance from his birth-place to the world!

EUGENE GOODENOUGH, *a travelled
Warwickshire Squire, and Member of
the Athenian Club.*

It is gratifying, Gentlemen, to observe that, in an age like the present, so distinguished for philanthropy and charitable subscriptions, we do not overlook the illustrious dead, who have been the ornaments of our isle. In the first rank of these stands without dispute our immortal Shakspeare. Born in the same county as himself, (and I own it with pride,) I have nourished, and, as I hope, improved my mind with frequent study of his deathless works; and local partiality, a feeling natural to most of us, impels me to recommend that Stratford should be the site of the proposed building

to his memory. History, Gentlemen, both ancient and modern, teems with anecdotes of the pleasure afforded to illustrious as well as common men, by treading a spot, consecrated as it were, by having given birth to true genius; and examples must be familiar to you all, from the hero of Macedon by the tumulus of Achilles, to the elegant author of the Pleasures of Memory.

*Nescio quâ natale solum dulcedine cunctos
Ducit, et immemores non sinit esse sui,*

to strengthen my assertion with the authority of the poet of Sulmo. This gratification must necessarily be much enhanced, when something meets the eye, which may at once remind one of the distinguished individual, and of the impression which his writings or acts have left on the minds of his fellow-countrymen. More than half the pleasure, which has been the fruit of my five years' travels in various parts of Europe, has resulted from this reflection; and I know not which circumstance afforded me most delight in the Levant, the examina-

tion of the field of Troy, the scene of Homer's inventions, or the recollection, when I was at Smyrna, of being at his *probable* birth-place. I say *probable*; for you all are aware that seven cities contended for the honour of his having been respectively their child; and to this hour, the dispute remains undecided, though general opinion seems to incline on the side of Smyrna. Be it as it may, our Stratford is more fortunate than the city of Asia Minor, for no one has ever questioned its claim to the honour of having given birth to Shakspeare; whose genius was probably not less original than Homer's; whose knowledge of the human heart was yet more subtle and profound; from whose works may be gleaned a noble system of philosophy, not only moral, but metaphysical; and who, though he may be found to doze pretty often, like Melesigenes himself, was certainly not less susceptible of high inspirations, nor less gifted with the *ore magna sonaturo*.

The evidence then of many anecdotes, interspersed in history, naturally assigns to

Stratford the site of the monument in question. And if, Gentlemen, not there, wherē, I ask, do you propose to place it? At Bath? At the Land's-End? At the Orcades? On the top of Wharnside, as suggested by Mr. Ogee? On Parnassus itself, if set free by the Greeks, as poetically, if not conveniently hinted by Signor Dimitri? In, or near the Metropolis, in fine? With much less reason, I think, there, than elsewhere; for experience proves that the façades of buildings in or about London, speedily become as begrimed as the Venetian Moor's face itself. Add too that, the clatter of drays, the *gee-os* of coachmen, and the click-clack of dandies, harmonize but ill with that contemplative state of mind, to which the memory of Shakspeare ought naturally to give rise. The muses always loved retirement.

With regard to the style of the building, I trust that preference will be given to the Greek, though I am not sufficiently versed in architecture to suggest any satisfactory plan. But I trust the good sense of the Committee will keep equally clear of the preposterous and

mean; and would reject with the same ridicule, a design that might exhibit a Pantheon of Rome, or a Stratford church-yard tombstone. Our school of statuary is of late so much improved, that, in spite of the *ric-à-ric* chisels of the Canovas and Thorvaldsens, I hope the execution of the sculpture will be committed to our own artists. It is to be regretted that no well-authenticated portrait of the poet is known to exist. The resemblance of his statues, placed in the corridors of our theatres, I hold to be imaginary, or copied from erroneously received engravings. The most creditable of these is perhaps that in the rotunda of Drury-Lane; though I should be unwilling to propose its imitation, thinking it best to leave open an untrodden field for the inventive faculties of the artist, on whom the carving may devolve. It has often occurred to me, that the bust in the chancel at Stratford, is more valuable than generally supposed; for it must have been cut and erected shortly after the death of Shakspeare; and we have abundant proofs that there existed artists at that

period in England, capable of transmitting correct likenesses, whether in wood, stone, or marble.

It must be confessed, that the moment chosen for announcing the plan in agitation is not very propitious, Distress stalking as she is, in rags and tatters, through Ireland, and howling for relief. For if we imagine Famine clinging to one end of the public purse, and Shakspeare to the other, it is to be feared we shall find, in spite of his merits, that Famine will out-cling him. But in all these cases, hurry is to be avoided; and with regard to submitted plans, I conjure you, again and again, Gentlemen, not to suffer yourselves to be dazzled by a *pretty* drawing, or by the noisy reputation of a *Crescent*, *Quadrant*, or *Parade* architect; but rather to digest maturely the bearings and spirit of the proposed plans, and select deliberately that, which may at once be worthy of Shakspeare, and of the talents of our native artists.

THE CHAIRMAN.

The opinions which we have heard this night, Gentlemen, from both below and above ground, (though we did not bargain for the former,) deserve perhaps ulterior consideration. But the night is far advanced, and, to use our favourite poet's diction, "the fiery-footed steeds of Aurora are galloping fast towards Phœbus' mansion." Your yawning convinces me, Gentlemen, that you will not refuse assent to what I am about to propose, which is, that this Committee do forthwith adjourn.

(The Committee adjourns sine die.)

FINIS.

James Bennett, Printer,
Tewkesbury.

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